

# 14 REASONS TO TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST

1. Each year, up to half of the nearly billion prescriptions taken in the U.S. are used improperly.
2. Medicine related problems are responsible for an estimated 10 percent of all hospital admissions.
3. 96 percent of patients don't ask any questions about their prescriptions.
4. Improper use of prescription medicines costs the economy over \$15 billion per year.
5. American businesses lose about 20 million work days due to incorrect use of medicines prescribed for heart and circulatory diseases alone.
6. The average physician writes 8,000 prescriptions a year, and the average community pharmacy dispenses nearly 30,000 prescriptions annually.
7. American dentists write nearly 200 million prescriptions for their patients.
8. One in five patients cannot read well enough to carry out their medication treatment effectively at home.
9. More than half the U.S. population receives at least one prescription drug each year.
10. A woman who is pregnant or thinks she may be should not take any medicines unless prescribed or advised by a physician who knows she is pregnant.

*(Continued)*



**BE AWARE & TAKE CARE:  
*Talk to your pharmacist!***

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11. The most commonly prescribed medicines are:
- Cardiovascular medicines (heart and circulation-related);
- Anti-infectives (antibiotics, like penicillin);
- Mental health medications;
- Analgesics (pain-killers); and
- Diuretics (sometimes called "water pills").
12. It's important to ask your pharmacist for information about the medicine you or members of your family are taking.
13. There are important questions you should ask whenever you receive a new prescription medicine. Be sure you ask:
- What is the name of the medicine and what is it supposed to do?
  - How and when do I take it—and for how long?
  - If I miss a dose, what should I do?
  - What foods, drinks and other medicines or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?
  - Are there any side effects, and what should I do if they occur?
  - Will this new prescription work safely with the other medicine (prescription and nonprescription) I am taking?
14. Be sure to tell your health care professionals:
- The names of all the prescription and nonprescription medicines you are taking, and the conditions for which you take them;
- If you are allergic to any medicines;
  - If you have any problems with any medicines;
  - If you are, or could be, pregnant.